

In the Claims:

On page 10, line 6 please insert the following:

What is claimed is:

1-12. (Canceled)

13. (New): A method for producing a colored sand composition containing a plurality of silica sand grains with outer coatings of a color pigment, the method comprising:

- mixing the plurality of silica sand grains with at least one dry color pigment to produce a sand pigment mixture;
- mixing a caustic soda and water to form a dilute caustic soda solution;
- mixing boric acid with the dilute caustic soda solution to form a boric acid/caustic soda solution;
- mixing a binder with the boric acid/caustic soda solution to form a coating solution;
- covering the sand pigment mixture with the coating solution; and
- heating the covered sand pigment mixture to produce the silica sand grains having an outer pigment coating.

14. (New): The method of Claim 13, wherein heating includes heating without adding gases in an indirect heating chamber within a temperature range of 300°C to 900°C.

15. (New): The method of Claim 13, wherein the binder includes sodium water glass.

16. (New): The method of Claim 13, wherein mixing boric acid with the dilute caustic soda includes allowing the boric acid/caustic soda solution to cool after combining the boric acid with the dilute caustic soda solution.

17. (New): The method of Claim 13, wherein the boric acid/caustic soda solution has a boric acid content approximately 35.7% by mass and a density between approximately 1.4 and 1.6 g/cm³.

18. (New): The method of Claim 13, wherein the boric acid content is partially neutralized by the dilute caustic soda and at least one or two free protons are produced per boric acid molecule.

19. (New): The method of Claim 15, wherein the ratio of boric acid/caustic soda solution to sodium water glass is approximately between 1:2 to 1:6.

20. (New): The method of Claim 19, wherein the ratio of boric acid/caustic soda solution to sodium water glass is 1:3.6.

21. (New): A composition made from a heating process comprising:
silica grains having an outer coating of at least one pigment deposited from the heating process of a sand pigment mixture covered with a coating solution comprising at least one of caustic soda, boric acid, binder, and water during exposure of the covered sand pigment mixture to the heating process when conducted in a temperature range between approximately 300°C and 900°C.

22. (New): The composition of Claim 21, wherein the binder includes sodium water glass.

23. (New): The composition of Claim 21, wherein the heating process includes preventing the contacting of the coated sand pigment by carbon dioxide during heating.

24. (New): The composition of Claim 21, wherein the coating solution includes one part caustic soda dissolved between approximately one and five parts water.

25. (New): The composition of Claim 24, wherein the ratio of caustic soda to water is 1:2.

26. (New): The composition of Claim 24, wherein the coating solution further includes one part boric acid dissolved between approximately one and five parts caustic soda solution.

27. (New): The composition of Claim 26, wherein the ratio of boric acid/caustic soda solution to sodium water glass is 1:3.6.

28. (New): The composition of Claim 21, wherein the sodium water glass includes % mass compositions of approximately 8.2% Na₂O, 27.3% SiO₂, and 64.5% H₂O.